

Pawtuxet River Authority and Watershed Council

8 Hope Furnace Road, Hope, RI 02831

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Monthly Board Meeting

PRA Office, Hope – April 4, 2011

Board Members Present: Bob Nero, Jack Donovan, Rita Holahan, Jack Lancellotta, Ginny Leslie, Mike Maddalena, Brian Manning, Carl Mattson, Ed Soltys, Gary Trott

Board Members Absent: Ross Adrain, Scott Goodinson (excused), Arthur Langlais, Paul Lockett (excused)

Guests: Hope Leeson, R.I. Natural History Survey; Jimmy Johnson of Scituate

Presentation on Mile-A-Minute Vine

Hope Leeson gave a presentation on this invasive species that has recently been found in the Pawtuxet watershed, including at Meshanticut Brook in Cranston and in the Route 295 corridor. It thrives in wet areas, along river and power line corridors. She described its appearance and growing habits; it grows up to 6 inches a day. URI is experimenting with the Mile-A-Minute Vine Weevil; 500 weevils were introduced at each of two locations in 2009 and 2010. Pre-emergent herbicides don't work well in wetlands as they get diluted.

Mr. Nero offered to mobilize volunteers to pull up the vine in June; Ms. Holahan said we could look for emergent plants at Tirocchi Field during the clean-up. Ms. Leeson provided 50 bags with an identification card and an envelope to send any suspected samples to the Natural History Survey.

Call to Order

Chairman Bob Nero called the meeting to order at 7:22 p.m. A quorum was present. Mr. Nero re-introduced Jimmy Johnson who has submitted an application to the Scituate Town Council to fill one of the vacant seats for that town. Ms. Leslie agreed to contact Arthur Langlais to ask him to submit his resignation in writing. The agenda was approved, with an addition of discussion of water quality monitoring above Pawtuxet Falls, on a motion by Mr. Manning and seconded by Mr. Mattson.

Approval of March, 2011 Meeting Minutes

The minutes were unanimously approved on a motion by Mr. Mattson, seconded by Mr. Maddalena.

Treasurer's Report

A report through the previous month was distributed and reviewed. Mr. Nero noted that the tipping fees at the Central Landfill were for debris at the Howard property that was collected and removed by a community service person. He also noted that a contractor had dropped boulders at the entrance most frequently used by dumpers

there which should cut down the debris to be removed.

Mr. Nero noted that a Trails Grant reimbursement request for \$671.03 has to be re-submitted because the Department of Environmental Management apparently lost the paperwork.

Mr. Donovan noted that the receivables on page 4 should indicated \$8,800, not \$4,400 for Coventry.

Municipal Contributions

The annual report has been sent with a cover letter requesting money to Warwick and West Warwick. Mr. Mattson provided a copy of a page from the Annual Budget for Coventry and noted that under Professional Services, there is an entry of \$5,000 for the Pawtuxet Valley River Authority. Mr. Donovan said that the town representatives had suggested to the town that they put in a line item for the PRA in the budget. The three Coventry representatives agreed that we should send an invoice to the town requesting the \$5,000 listed in the budget. Ms. Holahan said it is a good idea to send an invoice or statement to the towns so that we will have a paper trail if we want to include these amounts in our list of receivables in financial reports. Mr. Nero agreed to send invoices in addition to the cover letter already sent with the annual reports.

PROJECT UPDATES

Spring Clean-ups

The April 9 clean-up at the West Warwick Industrial Park in Natick:

the town will provide a dumpster: the Bobcat operator and a tree service contractor will be there; we will have a cook-out. Mr. Nero presented information on a new portable propane grill that will cost between \$300 and \$400. On a motion by Mr. Trott, seconded by Mr. Manning, the board voted unanimously to purchase one.

On April 16, clean-ups will be at Roger Williams Park (ServeRI is the lead group) and at the new Norwood Conservation Area, where there will be a walk-through on Sunday, April 10. On April 17, there will be an all-day clean-up of land along river behind Tirocchi Field, Warwick sponsored by NRCS EWP program.

At the NRCS clean-ups in May, most of the work will be done by contractors, but some volunteer labor will be needed. The Johnson's Pond Civic Association has been asked to help out at the river clean-up downstream from the pond in Coventry on June 4th.

Pawtuxet Dam Removal

Mr. Nero reported that the bill amending the 1915 act requiring the Providence Water Supply Board to maintain the dam at Pawtuxet Falls has passed both the House and the Senate. After analyzing the cash flow needs of the project, Ms. Holahan and Mr. Ardito from the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program met with representatives from Centreville Bank for a short term bridge loan for the project. Rita Holahan said that she and Tom Ardito also met with the Rhode Island Foundation and she was optimistic about their providing a short term

no-interest loan for the project.

Ms. Leslie reported that she had secured \$100 each from the Friends of the Pawtuxet and the Pawtuxet Village Association to pay for the URI Watershed Watch program water quality testing for samples taken at Rhodes on the Pawtuxet. Ms. Holahan indicated that she will try to get some funding from the Cranston Conservation Commission. The water quality sample collection will start in May.

Pawtuxet Paddle – June 25th : We will have a cookout at this event.

Graffiti at Phenix-Harris Riverwalk: Mr. Nero reported that Action Pressure Washing had provided a quote for \$225 to remove the graffiti on the concrete wall.

Pontiac Canoe Launch: Shalvey Brothers provided an estimate of \$1,850 to make alterations to address erosion issues and to monitor the results through several rain events. Ms. Leslie suggested getting another quote.

Proposed Pawtuxet River Study: The Army Corps of Engineers called a meeting of interested parties regarding a study of possible actions to address flooding problems on the Pawtuxet. About 20 people attended, including representatives from the cities and towns. The towns would have to come up with some money for a match to pay for the study. Mr. Nero said that some town officials believe the

solution to the flooding is to dredge the river. He will notify board members of the next meeting on this subject.

Salt Water Fishing Show: Several board members attended this event and reported that it went well and they had a lot of contact with people and networked with other watershed groups. Mr. Trott was recognized and thanked for his efforts in organizing and setting up for the show.

Land & Water Conservation Summit: Mr. Donovan reported that the summit went well. DEM will offer \$4 million for open space acquisition this year.

City of Cranston Flood Committee: Mr. Maddalena reported on this new committee. He is waiting to hear about having a representative of the PRA speak at one of the committee's meetings.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Donovan, seconded by Mr. Lancellotta, the meeting was adjourned at 9:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ginny Leslie, Secretary